

Application No. 10/032,979
Amendment Dated: October 28, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 19, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of the Claims

Claims 23-76 were pending and were rejected. Claims 45-76 have been cancelled. Claims 23-44 are pending.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) Over Nakamura in View of Addeo

Claims 23, 29, 31-33, 35-38, 42, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Japanese Patent Publication JP10-042264 naming Nakamura. ("Nakamura") in view of U.S. Patent 5,335,011 to Addeo et al. ("Addeo"). However, this rejection is improper. A *prima facie* obviousness rejection requires that there be some suggestion or motivation to combine the references. MPEP § 2143. This suggestion or motivation is lacking in the combination of Nakamura and Addeo.

Nakamura is drawn to a videoconferencing system that includes an automatic camera tracking feature. Examiner relies on the embodiment shown in Fig. 3, in which a camera 2, and two combination microphones/speakers 3, 4 are mounted in a frame 12 that is mounted on a truck 13 to make the frame movable. Examiner proposes that this frame is the videoconferencing bar recited in independent claim 23. Examiner concedes that Nakamura does not teach the position signal limitations of claim 23, and proposes Addeo to supply these missing limitations.

Addeo is drawn to a videoconferencing system that uses a microphone array to receive sound from fixed, non-overlapping volume zones. The microphone array generates a monaural signal and a direction signal that indicates the zone from which the sound originated. The receiving station processes the direction signal to play back the monaural signal through multiple speakers at different volumes to cause the sound to emanate from a virtual location on the displayed image that corresponds to the actual location at the other end from which the sound originated.

Examiner argues that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Nakamura to include the position signal of Addeo. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Review of paragraph [0036] of Nakamura shows that the purpose of the frame 12 and truck 13 is to make the camera movable, as specifically to enable rotation of the

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television camera. Review of paragraphs [0014] indicates that the camera rotates into a direction determined by differences in the sound detected by the two microphones, thus pointing the camera at the person speaking. However, when the camera of the embodiment of Fig. 3 is pointed at the speaker, the signals received by the two microphones will be substantially similar, thus the system will know that the camera is pointed in the correct direction. When a second person begins speaking, the signals detected by the microphone will again be different, and the camera will rotate to point at the second person. Again, when the camera is pointed at the person currently speaking, the signals from the microphones will not be different.

However, operation of the system disclosed in Addeo requires that there be a difference in signals received by the microphone array to generate the required position signal. This information is then used by the receiving device to recreate the sense of position by the relative position of the person speaking. However, the system of Nakamura is incapable of generating such a position signal during operation because the system will adjust itself to a point where there is no difference in the signals received by the microphones. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine Addeo with Nakamura to create a videoconference system as recited in claim 23.

In addition to claim 23, independent claim 38 was rejected over the same combination. However, the rejection of these claims, as well as those depending therefrom is inappropriate for the reasons stated. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 23-44 is therefore requested.

Rejection of Claims 45-76

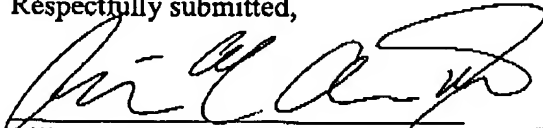
To simplify issues in the present case, claims 45-76, which were rejected in view of other references using different reasoning are cancelled without prejudice to re-file in a continuation application.

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Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 23-44 are in condition for allowance and requests that a notice of allowance issue for these claims.


Respectfully submitted,


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